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the public taste. If such pictures could find buyers at good prices, then the case was hopeless; any picture could find buyers, for, go where you might, worse than these could not be found. Never was an instance to which the old Greek maxim, "Beware of too much," could have been better applied. An occasional contribution to the Exhibition, flattery in plenty from personal friends, these may for a time enable nothing to pass for something; nay, to pass for much! But, if two negatives make an affirmative, what must be the power of a hundred and sixty negatives. The affirmative result of such a combination was manifestly destined to be fatal. The artist had committed the blunder of allowing the public full opportunity to prove by its own unaided faculties that the worst the critics had said of him was an amiable understatement; and it was a relief to find in the sequel that the public knew very well how to look out for its own interest. The result of the sale has probably convinced the most incredulous that the day for this sort of thing is gone by, and it will be a long time, we trust, before such another barefaced attempt will be made upon the presumed credulity and ignorance of the people.

MR. T. P. ROSSITER'S MILTON GALLERY.

We must, in justice to our readers, say a few words about Mr. Rossiter's pictures of Adam and Eve, but the task is one which we would gladly forego. The Exhibition is simply disgraceful. On the artist's part, it looks like a formal renunciation of all pride in his professional position, unenviable as that position has always been. On the part of the public, it is difficult to account for any body's going to see the pictures once. It would be impossible to account for any body's going *twice*. Those who go to gratify a reputable curiosity, or under the delusion that they are to see

something which can be called art, probably leave the hall with feelings more easily imagined than described. Those who go, as it is likely many do, from a desire to whet a coarser appetite, might save themselves a small expense, and secure an equal stimulus to their animal natures by the contemplation of the wooden-jointed or stuffed kid dolls in the windows of the nearest toy shop. In his knowledge of the human body and his power to represent it, Mr. Rossiter is quite on a par with the makers of these mannikins. The chaste and noble spirit of Milton sits too high to be smirched by any contact so degrading as this, but that very height makes Mr. Rossiter's assumption of the place of interpreter of the poet seem the more impudent. We suppose, however, that, so long as two hundred people a-day can be induced, from whatever motive, to spend an hour's time, and pay twenty-five cents to see such pictures, there will be artists to paint them. Still, as we cannot shame the painters, we must hope that the public will some day reach that point of culture that they will compel a reform by letting such exhibitions severely alone. Pictures like these, no matter what may be pretended, are painted from none but the lowest and most mercenary motives, and will only cease to be painted when they are found to be unremunerative speculations.

PICTURES BY JEAN LÉON GÉROME.

The most noteworthy exhibition of the past month has been that of Gérôme's pictures, at Mr. Knoedler's gallery. It is characteristic of the way in which criticism is "done" in our newspapers, that the "Evening Post" praised Mr. Rossiter's "Milton Gallery," and was very much shocked at the indecency of Gérôme's "Turkish Dancing Girl." It, also, spoke flatteringly of the drawing and color of the American daubs—as in-

deed, what American is not sure beforehand of a good word from that easy journal—and came to the conclusion that the Frenchman's masterpiece was only a clever piece of drawing, poor in color, and not art at all!

The simple truth is, that these pictures—"The Turkish Dancing Girl," "The Prayer in the Desert," and "The Turkish Butcher Boy"—are three of the most masterly works ever seen in this country. The first-named is every way the greatest; elaboration of detail, and truth of realization could hardly be carried further than in these comparatively small works, but everything is subordinated to Art, and it would be difficult to say where the "Almée" is lacking. The drawing is perfect, the color harmonious, the painting of the flesh has all the soft firmness of nature, and she herself in her most Eastern mood never stained the ivory skin with a more delicate olive than that which the sumptuous torso of this Egyptian shows. The subjects which Gérôme chooses are often such as would be fatal to an artist of a more sensual type, but the intellect alone seems to be the shaper of his creations; whether he has an ulterior purpose in his choice it would not perhaps be wise to inquire; but, he allows the spectator to suspect none. He stands as impassive and unconcerned outside of the scene he is painting as ever did Goethe, and it is in vain that you ask whether he approves or disapproves the actions of his men and women, whether he seeks to understand their motives, or to solve the problem of their existence; all that you can certainly know is, that a most patient, exact and learned workman, a keen, penetrating intellect, has set himself to the task of truly reporting certain phases of human character, and that your part is to accept his work with thankfulness, and study it with the earnestness that such work deserves.

It is with no little pride that we announce that these three pictures have been bought in this city. The "Almée" was imported without the least expectation that it would find a purchaser; it was Mr. Knoedler's liberal wish to have this fine picture known to America, but it is to remain with us, and adds another, perhaps the most splendid ornament to the choice gallery of for-

eign works which is rapidly forming in this city.

We know that there are some among us who do not consider it good fortune that brings these foreign pictures to our country, and keeps them here. We remember several years ago hearing a distinguished American painter say that, if he had his way, he would lay a duty, so heavy as to be prohibitory, on all foreign pictures; he thought that they had done us nothing but injury; although, as we remember, the injury had consisted in preventing commissions being given to our own men, rather than in corrupting their style or making their thought less American. And others, as we have said, heartily agree with him in this opinion.

Competition is good in other than material affairs. Of course, if A. keeps a slender stock of poor goods, holds them at high prices, or even at low prices, lets them be rained on, snowed on, mildewed, moth-eaten; allows them to get rusted, faded, dusty, and out-of-fashion, and doesn't much care what happens to them so long as he knows that the neighbors can buy nowhere else, he will be unpleasantly affected by the advent of the brisk, wide-awake, smart new comer who suddenly opens in the best situation on the high street a newly painted, newly furnished shop, supplied with the freshest, jauntiest, newest and most modish goods. As he watches the steady stream of customers that sets immediately in the direction of the new establishment, and contrasts it with the slender attendance at his own counter, angelic in its fewness and its far-betweenness, he will, undoubtedly, if he be sufficiently human and unwise, wish that he had the making of the law, and could compel competing strangers to pay so heavy a toll on the turnpike that they would shrink aghast and betake themselves elsewhere. But if he be shrewd and energetic, he will see that his best weapon is an equal skill and adaptation with that which is opposed to him, and that if he cannot get away all his new enemy's customers, he can at least divide his forces by making it worth their while to trade with him as well.

No one would regret more than ourselves the growth of any art among us which should be un-American, foreign to the character, to the life, the manners of

our own people. Such art might show itself clever, learned, skilful; we would give very little for it. If we thought that bringing over even the works of such masters as Luys, Gérôme, Tissot, Millais, Rossetti, would tend to that result, we would fight against them with all our might. For we value nationality, individuality most highly, and don't believe in any literature or art largely abstracted from these notions. We believe Homer, Dante, Chaucer, Shakspeare, Milton, are greater, not less, because their verse smacks strongly of Greece, Italy, and England. We like Dürer's Teutonism, Van Eyck's Netherlandishness, Angelico's, Giotto's, Orcagna's, Titian's, Italian flavor. And so in our own dear land we like best the men who paint America, and American men and women; we like the homely fields, the native hills, red shirts, plain ways, refinement not borrowed from abroad—the men who give us these, as they are, we count our best men; we will forgive much in their work for the savor of that salt.

Therefore, if we thought this element put in jeopardy by the introduction of foreign pictures, we would say so, and act on our belief to the extent of our ability. But we recognize only a stimulating, healthy influence. The pictures painted to-day are more national by far, more individual, more of all that we

mean of best when we say American, than ever before. Eastman Johnson, and Griswold, and the Hills, and Charles Moore, and Furness, and Farrer, are of to-day and of here, not of yesterday and Italy. And the older men, the very ones who grumble at the advent of these strange faces, how un-American they were, and are! How seldom their work tastes of the soil! How they paint Italy, Italy, Italy, and classic phantasms, and seem to shun the common as if it were unclean, the homely as if it were and must be low!

We don't in the least doubt that these works are influencing us—both the artists and the public—but it is in a good way. It is a little sad, sometimes, to see poor, feeble, slovenly pictures, hung for sale on the walls of public galleries by the side of these noble guests of ours, creep away to some remoter place where ignorance and inexperience may perhaps think their defects beauties, so that out of the splendor of that dazzling neighborhood they may be bought by some one who has not seen the masterpieces. But the painter, if he be earnest, and modest, and faithful, will not be hurt by the experience; he will be roused to new effort, he will aspire to new excellence, and the lance that wounded him will cure him, as that Achillean one did Telephus of old.

In Memory of ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

———"His mute dust
We honor, and his living worth;
A man more pure and bold and just,
Was never born into the earth.

Sleep sweetly, tender heart, in peace:
Sleep, holy spirit, blessed soul,
While the stars burn, the moons increase,
And the great ages onward roll."